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rice, corn and popcorn, wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 1% to about 40% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of chocolate chips, cheese and dairy products, fruit pieces, cinnamon, chocolate powder, cocoa, pieces of nuts, sesame seeds, pieces of ham, pieces of bacon, and mixtures thereof.

41. A method according to claim 40 wherein said initial formed hand-held food item is a rice cake, wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 5% to about 30% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item;

42. and wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of chocolate chips, cheese and dairy pieces, fruit pieces, cinnamon, and mixtures thereof.

43. A method according to claim 41 wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 10% to about 20% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material are chocolate chips.

44. A method according to claim 40 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 5% to about 65% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 10% to about 80% by weight of said second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid syrup composition comprising from about 10% to about 90% by weight of a viscosity providing agent, from about 5% to about 80% by weight flavoring ingredients, from 0% to about 90% by weight bulking substance, from 0% to about 30% by weight fatty acid glycerides, and the balance being water.

45. A method according to claim 41 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 10% to about 60% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 20% to about 70% by weight of said second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid

syrup composition comprising from about 20% to about 80% by weight viscosity providing agent selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose, fructose, corn syrup and mixtures thereof, from about 5% to about 70% by weight flavoring ingredients selected from the group consisting of salt, cocoa powder, cheese powder, natural and artificial flavoring agents, and mixtures thereof, from 0% to about 80% by weight bulking substance selected from the group consisting of starch, cellulose fiber, bean fiber and mixtures thereof, from about 1% to about 20% by weight fatty acid glycerides selected from the group consisting of vegetable oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, cottonseed oil, canola oil, soybean oil, and mixtures thereof, with the balance being water.

Sub C1 46. A method according to claim 42 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 15% to about 30% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 30% to about 60% by weight of said second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid syrup composition comprising from about 50% to about 70% by weight sucrose, from about 5% to about 15% by weight flavoring ingredients, from about 1% to about 6% by weight vegetable oil, and the balance being water.

32 47. A method according to claim 43 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item is dried in an oven by being subjected to a temperature in the range of from about 75°C to about 250°C for a period of time in the range of from about 60 minutes to about 60 seconds.

48. A method according to claim 44 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item is dried in an oven by being subjected to a temperature in the range of from about 125°C to about 175°C for a period of time in the range of from about 10 minutes to about 2 minutes.

Sub D3 48. A method according to claim 1 wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 1% to about 50% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item.

Sub D4 49. A method according to claim 48 wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 5% to about 40% by weight of said first edible,

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7 heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item.

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50. A method according to claim 49 wherein said preliminary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 8% to about 30% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item.

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51. A method according to claim 48 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 5% to about 85% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 10% to about 80% by weight of said second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid syrup composition comprising from about 10% to about 90% by weight of a viscosity providing agent, from about 5% to about 80% by weight flavoring ingredients, from 0% to about 90% by weight bulking substance, from 0% to about 30% by weight fatty acid glycerides, and the balance being water.

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52. A method according to claim 49 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 10% to about 60% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 20% to about 70% by weight of said second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid syrup composition comprising from about 20% to about 80% by weight viscosity providing agent selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose, fructose, corn syrup and mixtures thereof, from about 5% to about 70% by weight flavoring ingredients selected from the group consisting of salt, cocoa powder, cheese powder, natural and artificial flavoring agents, and mixtures thereof, from 0% to about 80% by weight bulking substance selected from the group consisting of starch, cellulose fiber, bean fiber and mixtures thereof, from about 1% to about 20% by weight fatty acid glycerides selected from the group consisting of vegetable oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, cottonseed oil, canola oil, soybean oil, and mixtures thereof, with the balance being water.

53. A method according to claim 50 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item comprises from about 15% to about 30% by weight of said first edible, heat-sensitive food material; and from about 30% to about 60% by weight of said

second edible food coating material, with the balance comprising the initial formed hand-held food item; and wherein said second edible food coating material is a liquid syrup composition comprising from about 30% to about 70% by weight viscosity providing agent selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose, fructose, corn syrup and mixtures thereof, from about 5% to about 30% by weight flavoring ingredients selected from the group consisting of salt, cocoa powder, cheese powder, natural and artificial flavoring agents, and mixtures thereof, from about 20% to about 70% by weight bulking substance selected from the group consisting of starch, cellulose fiber, bean fiber and mixtures thereof, from about 1% to about 10% by weight fatty acid glycerides selected from the group consisting of vegetable oil, sunflower oil, safflower oil, cottonseed oil, canola oil, soybean oil, and mixtures thereof, with the balance being water.

54. A method according to claim 51 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item is dried in an oven by being subjected to a temperature in the range of from about 75°C to about 250°C for a period of time in the range of from about 60 minutes to about 60 seconds.

B2 55. A method according to claim 52 wherein said secondary coated hand-held food item is dried in an oven by being subjected to a temperature in the range of from about 125°C to about 175°C for a period of time in the range of from about 10 minutes to about 2 minutes.

56. A method according to claim 1 wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of chocolate chips, cheese and dairy products, fruit pieces, cinnamon, chocolate powder, cocoa, pieces of nuts, sesame seeds, pieces of ham, pieces of bacon, and mixtures thereof.

57. A method according to claim 56 wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of cheese and dairy products, pieces of ham, pieces of bacon, cinnamon, and mixtures thereof.

58. A method according to claim 57 wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of cheese and dairy pieces, pieces of ham, pieces of bacon and mixtures thereof.

59. A method according to claim 58 wherein said first edible, heat-sensitive food material is selected from the group consisting of cheese and dairy products.

60. A method according to claim 1 wherein the initial hand-held food item is conveyed along a first conveyor and the first edible, heat-sensitive food material is conveyed along a second conveyor elevated above said first conveyor and oriented in such a manner that the initial formed hand-held food items pass under the terminating edge of the second conveyor allowing the edible, heat-sensitive food material to drop onto the top of the initial formed hand-held food item.

61. A method according to claim 1 wherein the initial hand-held food item is conveyed along a first conveyor and the first edible, heat-sensitive food material is applied to the initial hand-held food item via a vibratory tray elevated above said first conveyor and oriented in such a manner that the initial formed hand-held food items pass under the vibratory tray allowing the edible, heat-sensitive food material to drop onto the top of the initial formed hand-held food item.

62. A method according to claim 1 wherein the initial hand-held food item is conveyed along a first conveyor and the first edible, heat-sensitive food material is applied via a hopper elevated above the first conveyor and oriented in such a manner that the initial formed hand-held food items pass under the hopper allowing the edible, heat-sensitive food material to drop onto the top of the initial formed hand-held food item.

63. A method according to claim 1 wherein the preliminary coated hand-held food item is conveyed along a first conveyor and the second edible food coating material is a liquid and is applied via a sprayer.

64. A method according to claim 1 wherein the preliminary coated hand-held food item is conveyed along a first conveyor and the second edible food coating material is applied via a hopper elevated above the first conveyor and oriented in such a manner that the preliminary coated hand-held food item passes under the hopper allowing the edible food coating material to drop onto the top of the preliminary coated hand-held food item.

65. A method according to claim 64 wherein the edible food coating material is liquid syrup.

66. A method according to claim 64 wherein the second edible food coating material is a powder that liquefies upon heating and then evaporates to absorb heat.

67. A method according to claim 1 wherein the edible food coating material is a powder that liquefies upon heating and then evaporates to absorb heat.